

Disparate Citation Practices in the Literature of the History of Cancer Metastasis

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Abstract

Citations found in two historical articles, which appeared in *Cancer Research*, a top Scientific Journal, were used to show both positive and negative attitudes towards my 21 historical publications written from 1958 to 2005 on cancer metastasis. Furthermore, scientific information concepts are cited critically so as to facilitate the derivation of a hypothesis which should promote the research of Third World scientists.

Keywords

Research; Journals; Citations; Third world scientists; Hypothesis

Introduction

As many as 21 scientific papers, which I published personally between 1958 and 2009, are first of all referenced in chronological order so as to exemplify my contributions in the special field of the history of cancer metastasis [1-21]. Thereafter, how American scientists cited them in *Cancer Research*, a far famed USA Journal, was examined critically.

Critically, a Journal of this prominence was utilized in 2010 by Talmadge and Fidler to review the "historical perspective" of "the biology of cancer metastasis [22]." Incidentally, much as 236 references were gathered and cited by these scientists, not one of my series was included! Note, in particular, that it was *Cancer Research* itself that published my own historical perspectives on haematogenous spread [8]. In it, I took pains to cite 108 articles written from 1712 to 1900, although I included among them five contemporaneous and four of my own work.

Work of note that appeared also in *Cancer Research* was from another American, Shimkin [23]. In his own contribution, he significantly included two of my papers in a list of 31 papers that he recommended to those who wish to start to write in this field [3,8]. Moreover, he added that I had "contributed valuable historical essays on several more specialized topics in cancer."

Cancer is necessarily of worldwide concern as regards both research and citation. Therefore, Eugene Garfield, [24] the guru of scientific information, ought to be cited. What did he aver? When he delivered the 1982 Annual Magnus Pyke Foundation Lecture, he said that "Most scientists in the West are not aware of research going on in Peru, Ghana, Singapore, or other countries collectively called the Third World." As he continued, "The representation of Third World research in international scientific journals is a neglected aspect of the New Information Order debate. How many research articles from Third World countries are published in journals from the developed countries? And what impact does Third World research have on the international scientific community?"

Community that consists of world scientists should be open to comparative research. To go back to Eugene Garfield, how can Third World Science be boosted? In his view, "Unfortunately, there is too little concern in the wider scientific community and in governmental agencies of the developed nations about the day-to-day problems confronting scientists in the Third World [25]. Aside from neglect, there is prejudice as well."

Well stated, I think. Indeed, as he also posited, "Despite many problems, researchers in the developing nations manage to produce a significant portion of the world's scientific output [26]. Imagine what these scientists could contribute to the global community if their difficulties could be reduced." Accordingly, I would hypothesize that one way of increasing the image of Third World scientists is for their work to be cited more often! In other words, as a matter of public policies, empathetic editors in developed countries should, as it were, even bend over backwards to accommodate their manuscripts!

Manuscripts should, as I see them, be submitted beyond one's own country. For instance, my papers were published in USA, UK, Switzerland, Denmark, India, Poland, The Netherlands, Italy, and New Zealand [1-4,6-21]. Clearly, USA predominated. Accordingly, I can conclude by hypothesizing again, namely, let one's citation be enriched by publishing in USA. However, one must carefully aspire to excel by following an acknowledged general principle, namely, "These citations have to be complete, correct and structured, so that all who want to work in the same field can easily find the cited papers [27]."

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